

Bi-Polar Girl Podcast Creator Graduates University of Pennsylvania & Featured In LPS Student Voices

Getting and giving support: First-gen college grad Rebecca McDow (BAAS `21) shares her student experience, plus her plans for grad school.

PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, May 23, 2022
/EINPresswire.com/ -- Repost From LPS Online Program

Rebecca McDow

Records and Information Manager, US Department of Justice

Education:

[Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences, University of Pennsylvania `21](#)

Associate of Arts, Montgomery College `19

Rebecca McDow (Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences `21) joined the Army right out of high school. She went on to build a career in the Department of Justice and start a family—she and her husband have two kids. An important achievement, however, remained incomplete.

“Finishing my bachelor’s degree was a personal goal,” she shares. “I’m now the first college graduate in my family. Everybody either dropped out or stopped at high school, so it was definitely a personal goal to get it done.” A college degree would help her move up professionally. And something else motivated her, too. “I suffer with mental illness, and a lot of times people look at that and say that you can’t go further in life because your mental illness is going to hold you back. My degree was a way to prove to myself that, absolutely not, it’s not going to hold me back,” she affirms.

Rebecca was confident she had the grades from her associate degree, which she earned at



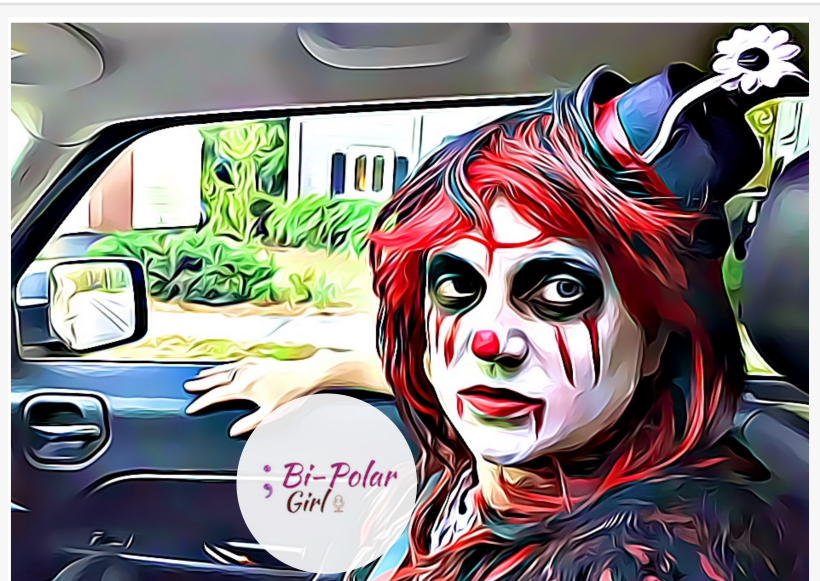
Rebecca J McDow Graduates PENN

[Montgomery College in Maryland](#), to get into a top school. She knew she wanted an online program that offered the flexibility to fit her personal and professional life. And a family connection from her husband Stephen's side—his great uncle was one of the first African Americans to attend Wharton—prompted her to see what options Penn might offer. She was thrilled to find the Bachelor of Applied Arts and Sciences at Penn LPS Online program.

"I had a great experience at Penn," she recalls. From the quality of support to the course delivery to the breadth of classes offered, Rebecca was impressed. "I found the online program to be just as robust as an in-person program. You're able to build relationships with your professors just as much as you could in a physical classroom," she says. "My advisor was always available. She helped me plan out my courses and made sure that I had everything I needed. I never felt like I was alone or lost in the education process; I always knew what the next step was."

When she encountered a challenging statistics course, Rebecca took advantage of online tutoring services. And Penn's user-friendly online learning platform, Canvas, helped her smoothly navigate each class. "I liked the course interface because it was clear where everything was—your syllabus, your to-dos, assignment due dates; overall it was just easy to use and rather intuitive."

Her classmates were an important part of her experience, too. Though she had some hesitancy returning as an older student, she quickly realized her classmates were largely also working professionals coming back to school, and that brought value. "Adult learners ask different questions than students who are coming right out of high school, and we tend to want to make the education match the real-world experiences we've had at work or in life in general. And so, the conversations we had in class were a lot deeper than I think it would have been had we all been straight out of high school," she reflects.



Bi-Polar Girl Podcast



Rebecca McDow Graduates



Finishing my bachelor's degree was a personal goal...I'm now the first college graduate in my family. Everybody either dropped out or stopped at high school."

Rebecca J. McDow

The Penn LPS Online students, Rebecca found, supported one another. "For each class, it felt like we were a group and we could reach out to each other and help each other." She even felt comfortable bringing her experience with mental illness into the classroom. "What was really beautiful about it is in the classes where I said something about my mental health, I had several peers reach out to me individually on Canvas. Some of them said, 'it's so great that you shared that with us.' Others shared that they struggled with depression or anxiety, or said, 'it's so nice to hear this from somebody else in the program,' and, 'we can

get this done!' Every time I shared it, the response was very warm and welcoming."

Rebecca prioritizes support outside the classroom, too. While studying at Penn during the COVID-19 pandemic, she and her husband started the Bi-Polar Girl podcast to create a space where guests can share their experiences with mental illness and listeners can feel less isolated. "The goal is that somebody will hear a story, see themselves in that story, and not feel so alone."

As Rebecca worked her way through the BAAS program, she selected the Literature, Culture, and Tradition concentration and customized it to focus on religious studies coursework. "I didn't study religion before, but now I'm hooked. And I found the classes I took at Penn to be very encompassing of many different religions."

Rebecca finished her degree in December and is excited to come to campus for graduation in May, but her academic journey isn't over. "The plan was always to continue on to a master's program. Where I want to go in the government sector—I need a master's to get there," she says. She intends to earn an advanced degree in philosophy of religion, the academic interest that she discovered at Penn.

Bi-Polar Girl Podcast

Bi-Polar Girl

+1 202-909-3949

[email us here](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/573623834>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2022 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.